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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM FLASH 5822
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE 8467
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3543
INFO RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE 0558
RUEHBL/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE 0933
RUEHJ1/AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE 6616
RUEHRH/USELO RIYADH IMMEDIATE 2473
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 8666
BT
S E C R E T DAMASCUS 06725
EXDIS
BEIRUT FOR FAIRBANKS
JERUSALEM FOR MCFARLANE
E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, PINT, LE, IS, SY, US
SUBJECT: MCFARLANE/FAIRBANKS MISSION: AMBASSADOR'S

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AUGUST 30 MEETING WITH JUMBLATT IN DAMASCUS

REF: AMMAN 7565

1. (S-ENTIRE TEXT).

2. AMBASSADOR MET WITH JUMBLATT AT THE EMBASSY RESIDENCE 1100 A.M. LOCAL AUGUST 30. A/DCM GLASPIE ATTENDED. JUMBLATT SAID HE HAD NOT SEEN ASSAD (AND DID NOT SEEM TO EXPECT AN IMMEDIATE SUMMONS), BUT HAD JUST SEEN CHIEF OF STAFF SHIHABI "WHO IS TURNING INTO A HARD LINER". SHIHABI IN DAMASCUS AND KHADDAM IN GENEVA HAD WANTED TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT HAD BEEN SAID BY ALL PARTIES IN PARIS, PARTICULARLY HADDAD. KHADDAM HAD BEEN SUSPICIOUS THAT JUMBLATT HAD MET WITH ISRAELIS THERE, WHICH JUMBLATT ASSURED HIM HE HAD NOT DONE. KHADDAM HAD LISTENED CAREFULLY TO JUMBLATT'S ACCOUNT OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH MCFARLANE AND HADDAD.

3. IN ADDITION TO LISTENING, HOWEVER, IT WAS CLEAR THAT KHADDAM AND SHIHABI MUST HAVE SAID A GOOD DEAL TO JUMBLATT. IN PARTICULAR, WHILE WE NOTE THAT ON AUGUST 29 ALI GHANDOUR, WHO HAD JUST SPOKEN TO JUMBLATT, WAS STILL TALKING ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF "FREEZING" THE LEBANESE-ISRAELI AGREEMENT (REF), JUMBLATT TOLD US THIS MORNING THAT "FREEZING" IS DEFINITELY NOT ENOUGH FOR THE SYRIANS. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD ASKED THE SYRIANS SEVERAL TIMES IN THE PAST WHETHER THEY WOULD SIMPLY ACCEPT A GOL ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE INSTRUMENTS OF RATIFICATION WOULD NOT BE EXCHANGED; THE SYRIAN RESPONSE IS AN UNEQUIVOCABLE NO.

4. JUMBLATT STRESSED TO THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE BASIC ISSUE REMAINS THE AGREEMENT. THE SYRIANS WANT "MORE THAN FREEZING" BUT JUMBLATT HAS BEEN UNABLE TO COME UP WITH A FORMULA THAT WOULD PLEASE THEM. JUMBLATT SPECIFIED THAT EVEN IF IT WAS POSSIBLE TO FORM A NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT NOW, THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF THE AGREEMENT WOULD DESTROY ANY NATIONAL ENTENTE IMMEDIATELY. IN ANY CASE, THE SHELLING ON AUGUST 29 HAS TURNED THE CLOCK BACK TO 1975 AND AS A PRACTICAL MATTER HAD SUPER-

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SEDED HIS TALKS WITH MCFARLANE IN PARIS, WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS VERY SATISFACTORY SINCE MCFARLANE HAD DISPLAYED GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF LEBANESE SITUATION. HOWEVER, THE ISSUE HAS EXPANDED BEYOND A DRUZE/PHALANGE PROBLEM AND TAKEN ON A NATIONAL CHARACTER AGAIN. JUMBLATT CLAIMED THAT HIS SEPARATE TALKS WITH HADDAD IN PARIS HAD PRODUCED NOTHING.

5. IN RESPONSE TO OUR URGING, JUMBLATT SAID THAT HE IS COUNSELING RESTRAINT TO HIS FORCES, ALTHOUGH THEY MUST DEFEND THEMSELVES, AND DEEPLY REGRETS THE CASUALTIES THAT HAVE ENSUED, INCLUDING OUR OWN MARINES. JUMBLATT SUGGESTED THE POSTING OF BASHIR'S PICTURE IN SHI'A AREAS MAY HAVE BEEN A DELIBERATE PHALANGE PROVOCATION. IF IT IS POSSIBLE FOR AMIN GEMAYEL TO LEARN ANYTHING, JUMBLATT SAID, HE SHOULD DO EVERYTHING HE CAN NOW TO FREEZE THE INTERNAL SITUATION.

6. IN SUMMARY, JUMBLATT'S MESSAGE FOR AMBASSADOR MCFARLANE IS THAT THERE CAN BE NO DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROGRESS UNTIL THE USG DEVISES AN APPROACH TO SYRIA WHICH WILL SATISFY SYRIA'S CONCERN ABOUT THE LEBANESE-ISRAELI AGREEMENT. ONLY WHEN THAT CONCERN IS SATISFIED WILL NSF LEADERS BE IN A POSITION TO PROCEED WITH NATIONAL ENTENTE. MEANWHILE, GEMAYEL MUST DO HIS BEST TO FREEZE THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND; THE DRUZE DO NOT WISH TO CHALLENGE THE PHALANGE IN KASRAWAN AND THE PHALANGE SHOULD EXERCISE THE SAME RESTRAINT IN DRUZE (AND SHI'A) AREAS.

7. JUMBLATT ASKED FOR NEWS OF ISRAELI INTENTIONS ON WITHDRAWAL FROM THE SHUF. THE AMBASSADOR SAID MCFARLANE

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SUBJECT: MCFARLANE/FAIRBANKS MISSION: AMBASSADOR'S

WAS WORKING ON THIS IN JERUSALEM AND HAD HOPED JUMBLATT
COULD GIVE HIM SOME AMMUNITION TO USE WITH ISRAELIS.
IT APPEARED THAT JUMBLATT HAD NOTHING THAT COULD HELP
MCFARLANE.

8. JUMBLATT SAID HE WOULD STAY IN DAMASCUS EXCEPT FOR A
TRIP TO AMMAN TO SEE HIS WIFE WHO WILL BE ARRIVING FROM
WASHINGTON. AMBASSADOR REMINDED HIM KING WOULD BEGIN HIS
TRIP TO THE FAR EAST IN THE NEXT DAY OR SO. JUMBLATT
SAID HE WOULD INFORM US IF HE LEFT DAMASCUS.

9. COMMENT: JUMBLATT SEEMED RESIGNED, THOUGH NOT
SHAKEN, BY HIS ENCOUNTERS WITH THE SYRIANS FOLLOWING
THE PARIS TALKS. HE CLEARLY BELIEVES THE SYRIANS HAVE
AND WILL EXERCISE A VETO OVER ANY POLITICAL ACTION HE
AND ANY OTHER FACTIONAL LEADERS MAY WISH TO TAKE IN
LEBANON. HE SEEMS CONVINCED FROM HIS DISCUSSIONS HERE
THAT ONLY A USG APPROACH TO THE SYRIANS WHICH AIMS AT
"ABROGATION" OF THE AGREEMENT WILL LOOSEN THE SYRIAN
STRANGLEHOLD ON HIS POLITICAL FREEDOM, AND THAT OF SOME
OF HIS OTHER LEBANESE COLLEAGUES. THE SAUDIS, HE SAID,
HAVE NO INTENTION OR ABILITY TO AFFECT THE SYRIANS ON
LEBANESE ISSUES. ONLY THE USG CAN DO THIS.

10. BEIRUT MINIMIZE CONSIDERED. PAGANELLI

END OF MESSAGE

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